

Premier Wine Country Auction to Benefit Cornell's Vinification and Brewing Lab, March 8

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By Linda McCandless

FAIRPORT, NY: Celebrate a marriage of fine food and wine and bid on some of New York's best at Casa Larga Vineyards in Fairport, NY, during the Fifth Annual Gala Dinner and Wine Country Auction, on Friday, March 8, 2002. The event benefits the Cornell Vinification and Brewing Technology Laboratory that opened at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, on March 31, 2000.

The gourmet dinner is preceded at 6 p.m. with a reception featuring fine New York State sparkling wines and specialty beers. More than 20 different wines and 10 beers are available throughout the evening. After dinner, auctioneer Harris Wilcox puts cases of premium New York State wine, delectable comestibles from local restaurants, and overnight B&B packages from Finger Lakes establishments under the gavel. Susan A. Henry, Ronald



The brewing pilot plant at the new Cornell Vinification and Brewing Technology Lab will serve as an instruction site for teaching and demonstrations, for product and process development, and for research in brewing science and technology. Here, Karl Siebert, food science professor at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station and brewing program leader for the new lab, evaluates beer for haze activity.

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A. Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, is the master of ceremonies for what has proven in the past to be a fun-filled evening

"The gala is our main fundraising event of the year," said Thomas Henick-Kling, enology program leader at the Agricultural Experiment Station. "The goal of the lab is economic development through applied science and technology combined with training programs for the wine and brewing industries. The result is higher quality wine and beer for consumers, and increased viability for New York State wineries and breweries."

In 2002 news, Henick-Kling said, "We have moved the analytical lab into the facility and conduct all experimental wine trials there. We also hired an extension enologist from Switzerland to manage day-to-day activities of the lab." He noted that Hans Juestrich-Eisenbart will start July 1.

On the brewing side, a pilot brewhouse has been purchased from Cargill Corp. as well as some fermenting and storage (lager) tanks. "The equipment had been installed in a large malt plant in Jefferson Junction, WI-at one time the largest malt house in the world- built by Ladish Malting Co., which is now owned by Cargill," said Karl Siebert, who is the brewing program leader. "The brewhouse is a double unit so trials can be run side by side simultaneously." Each of the two units has an adjunct cooker, a mash vessel, a lauter tun, and a brew kettle. A single wort cooler is used in sequence for each of the two brews. Operation is by manual control. "Engineers and brewers from Matt's Brewery in Utica are helping us set it up," said Siebert.

In related news, an undergraduate concentration in fermentation science at Cornell is under active discussion by faculty in the food science department in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Lack of trained personnel is a problem frequently cited by eastern establishments.



The Cornell Vinification and Brewing Technology Lab allows the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station to expand the experimental wine making program to test new grape varieties and wine making practices, showcase new equipment, train industry personnel, and conduct research that helpsthe New York wine industry.

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The Lab is a university/industry partnership on the part of Cornell University and the Experiment Station. Funding comes from Cornell, the state legislature, industry and local wine trails. The 2,000 sq. ft. laboratory builds on the Station's well-established programs in enology and fermentation science. Previously, programs used the facilities at the 10,000 sq. ft. Fruit and Vegetable Processing Pilot Plant in Geneva. Because of increasing demand for applied research and education, the enology program outgrew the Pilot Plant. In the last 25 years, more than 150 wineries and numerous microbreweries have been established in New York State. Annually, they attract over 2.7 million visitors to the area. The V&B Lab enables Geneva to serve this rapidly expanding industry.

Currently, the V&B Lab is used by faculty and staff, as well as wineries, breweries, suppliers, equipment manufacturers, educators, consumers, national associations, and students testing new technologies and piloting procedures. Workshops, experimental research projects, and certification programs at the Lab help integrate the brewers' and winemakers' experiences.

Dinner is \$100 per reservation (\$50 is tax deductible). Black tie is optional. Entrees include a choice of: breasts of wild duck with a black cherry/black peppercorn sauce; striped sea bass bathed in olive oil, cilantro and lemon; grill-roasted tenderloin of beef with parmesan crust and a rich cabernet sauce; or baked portebello mushrooms stuffed with savory spinach frittata and polenta. Dessert will be chocolate tulips filled with fresh fruits and berries on a pool of Champagne anglaise sauce. Overnight accommodations are available at the premier WoodCliff Lodge nearby. Bus transportation will be provided to Casa Larga from Woodcliff throughout the evening. For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Nancy Long, at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, Dept. of FS&T, Geneva, NY 14456, by calling 315-787-2288, or emailing npl1@cornell.edu

The related web site is <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/fst/vb/>

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